



## SCHOOL COMMITTEE

### BUSINESS MEETING OPEN SESSION MINUTES September 3, 2019

<b>Meeting:</b>	School Committee
<b>Date:</b>	September 3, 2019
<b>Location:</b>	MERMHS Library
<b>Attendees:</b>	Pamela Beaudoin, Superintendent Avi Urbas, Director of Finance Shannon Erdmann, Chairperson Rachel Fitzgibbon, Vice Chairperson Ken Warnock Ann Cameron Caroline Weld Eric Bourke
<b>Absent:</b>	
<b>Guests:</b>	
<b>Recorded by:</b>	Gail Hunter

**A. Call to Order** – Ms. Erdmann called the School Committee Business meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

- 1) Public Comment** – There was no public comment this evening.
- 2) Chairman's Report** – Ms. Erdmann stated she was happy the weather had permitted the first days of School Year 2019-2020 to go off without a hitch.
- 3) Consent Agenda** –
  - Acceptance of Warrants
  - Minutes

*Ms. Wolf moved to accept the Consent Agenda; Mr. Bourke seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously while Ms. Cameron, Ms. Weld and Ms. Fitzgibbon abstained from approving the Minutes of August 20, 2019, they were not in attendance.*

#### **4) Sub-Committee Reports – Subcommittee Organization FY 20**

Ms. Erdmann asked Mr. Bourke if he had any questions about Subcommittees. Mr. Bourke requested additional information about the Policy/Communication Sub-Committee. Mr. Warnock stated the District relied on its Policy Manual which was a document developed utilizing model language from MSCA (Massachusetts School Committee Association). Periodically the District needed to update the Policy Manual due to outdated language and specific needs of the District. This past year, Mr. Warnock, indicated the Sub-Committee reviewed the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Field Trip to Merrowvista and the overnight policy for all school trips.

Ms. Fitzgibbon stated Communication discussions reviewed the possibility of the School Committee developing a Facebook page; a School Committee Facebook page would be in violation of the State's Open Meeting Laws which ended discussion. The Sub-Committee is reviewing Clear Gov which is a software program with a portal for residents to review how funds are transferred between the Towns and District.

Ms. Erdmann asked for the time commitment to serve on the Policy/Communication Sub-Committee and Ms. Fitzgibbon and Mr. Warnock indicated 2 hours every 2 weeks with additional time required for the Merrowvista Task Force.

Ms. Cameron stated the goal of the Facilities/MSBC Sub-Committee was to deliver the new Memorial School Building on time and on budget. Superintendent Beaudoin stated the Sub-Committees would be reviewing security, technology, fields and playgrounds for all District Facilities in the coming year.

The School Building Committee community members are still involved with the project and meet regularly to review progress as part of additional Sub-Committees.

Ms. Erdmann indicated the Finance Sub-Committee meets regularly with community Finance Committee Chairs, Town Administrators and District Administrators. The group shared a good working relationship with open dialogue to eliminate surprises in the budget process. Finance Committee meets every 2 weeks from 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

Mr. Bourke stated he thought the Policy/Communication Sub-Committee would be a good fit for him. Ms. Weld stated it was a good place to start with the School Committee and many of current members had started there including herself.

Mr. Warnock stated he would be happy to serve as part of the Negotiation Team. Final FY 20 School Committee Sub-Committee members are:

**Facilities/MSBC Sub-Committee** (Ms. Weld and Ms. Cameron)

**Finance Sub-Committee** (Ms. Cameron and Ms. Erdmann)

**Policy/Communication Sub-Committee** (Ms. Fitzgibbon and Mr. Bourke)

**Negotiation Team** (Ms. Wolf and Mr. Warnock)

**5) Continued Business**

- School Committee 2019-2020 Goal Setting

The Committee discussed Draft School Committee Goals for FY 20.

Recommended changes to FY 19 goals are in blue.

- Develop and deliver a fiscally responsible budget that restores educational quality, supports District goals, recognizes the confines of Proposition 2 ½ and advocates for increased funding for the District.
  - Rebuild Manchester Memorial School on time and on budget and communicate the capital plan to maintain all 3 District schools and assets.
  - Successfully negotiate a contract with META Unit B (Teacher Assistants) using IBB.
  - Support implementation of programming that enhances our organization's cultural proficiency and promotes respect and appreciation for individual and cultural differences.
  - Target resources to support social/emotional needs of students across the District.
- SRO Discussion – Continued

Superintendent Beaudoin stated the District is in the same place as it was at the last School Committee meeting due to tight schedules around the opening of school.

Essex is unable to offer an officer to fill the position. Interim Chief Fitzgerald indicated at the Safety Meeting that all MBTS Boards were on board with the proposed plan for the SRO position. The Town Administrators understand the structure and the District is good to proceed with the concept and implement the position at the beginning of the second quarter of the school year.

Manchester will place an officer with the District and the District will pay for the contracted service. It will be tight, but funds will come from the General Fund and if necessary, from Reserves.

Superintendent Beaudoin indicated the SRO officer will serve as a community liaison, resource to inform the communities of needs within the District and provide security expertise around access to buildings, response preparedness and as a direct liaison with the Town Police

Departments in the event of student injury or a car accident. Many of these responsibilities now fall on Principals and Teachers.

Ms. Cameron would like to see the Policy/Communication Sub-Committee develop information around how classrooms are different in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and why the District needs an SRO position to support the work of the District around social emotional health of the students. Additionally, it is important the communities understand the State is not funding these programs.

*Ms. Cameron moved to approve the SRO position contingent on agreement of both Towns; Ms. Weld seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

Ms. Fitzgibbon expressed the need for the SRO to be trained to work with kids. Superintendent Beaudoin indicated that the person applying for this position will have been trained in the MA SRO training program. Ms. Fitzgibbon indicated there was additional training she would like to see the SRO complete and will forward the information to Superintendent Beaudoin.

- Teacher Assistant Association Formation

Superintendent Beaudoin provided background information on the Teacher Assistant Association process to date. The formation of the Association dates to May 2017 when Mr. Martino and Mr. Lanigan spoke with the Teacher Assistants about forming a union with META. At that time most of the Teacher Assistants (approximately 90%) were interested in becoming part of META.

META filed with the Department of Labor to be recognized. Superintendent Beaudoin and Attorney Bell met with the Department of Labor representative Ms. Sullivan on August 23, 2019 to review the process to date. Superintendent Beaudoin is recommending the School Committee agree to the organization of the Teacher Assistant Association. Superintendent Beaudoin believes it is in the interest of the District to voluntarily recommend the organization. MERSD is likely one of a few Districts without union representation for Teacher Assistants.

Ms. Erdmann asked for clarification about contract negotiations for Unit B, Teacher Assistants. Superintendent Beaudoin stated there would be separate contracts and it would be challenging to negotiate the contracts simultaneously because representatives for Administration and School Committee would be the same for both contracts.

Unit A, are professionally licensed employees with the same working conditions, hours and pay. Unit B, employees have a different pay scale, are at will employees, have different workday schedules and job qualifications. Superintendent Beaudoin indicated the District would review paraprofessional contracts from other Districts as part of developing the contract for Teacher Assistants.

Mr. Warnock asked about administrative and School Committee time related to the new contract and specifically inquired if there were ways to gain efficiencies in managing the two groups. Superintendent Beaudoin stated the Teacher Assistants already have their own set hours, perform different jobs and are currently supported by administration with annual reviews and a hire and

fire process in place. META will have 2 separate union leaderships teams, the District will have one team.

Ms. Cameron asked if META is the preferred organization to represent the Teacher Assistants. Superintendent Beaudoin indicated there have already been two votes (the first vote expired) in support of META and the Teacher Assistants endorsed META to represent them. As part of the organization process other unions may make presentations to the group but given the groups small size it is unlikely.

*Ms. Weld moved the School Committee voluntarily recognize the MERSD Teacher Assistant Association; Ms. Cameron seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

- **Memorial School Update**

Superintendent Beaudoin stated the opening of school went smoothly. New traffic patterns worked well thanks to fantastic preparation on the part of Principal Willis. Teachers indicated construction was white noise and shaking of earth has subsided. The District is being kept in the loop on key construction decisions and the weekend process is being followed. All focus is on the quick timeline for completion of the new building in one year.

Ms. Cameron asked if there were any neighborhood concerns? Superintendent Beaudoin indicated there was some concern expressed about trucks moving too quickly. Principal Willis has proposed adding speed bumps and stop signs to address the issue. Ms. Cameron asked if Brook Street was a problem with people coming in the back way. It has not been a problem and fencing is helping with compliance.

Mr. Warnock asked about a problem with a crosswalk behind Essex Elementary School. Superintendent Beaudoin stated the crosswalk is not a sanctioned crosswalk because it does not end at a sidewalk.

Prior to the opening of School Year 2019-2020 there was a Safety Meeting with Chief Francis and Interim Chief Fitzgerald both chiefs were very helpful in getting the District up and running for the first day of school.

Mr. Urbas stated he is noticing a shift in the heavy decision-making process from last year now that construction has started. The heavy decision phase has adjusted to more specific questions that arise when an item like playground resurfacing has been underestimated. Superintendent Beaudoin indicated John Rich calls to confirm decisions and neighbor relationships are immediately handled by Dore & Whittier.

## **6) Superintendent's Report –**

- **Opening of School**

Ms. Erdmann inquired about the status of the MOU with the Boosters. Superintendent Beaudoin indicated the MOU had been forwarded to Ms. Delisio and she was waiting to hear back from the Boosters.

Superintendent Beaudoin indicated District computers had been attacked by a ransom virus. The Tech Support Staff has been working on the problem all weekend and the virus has been quarantined. File access to Pay Roll and Student Management are managed off site and that information is safe. File access and WIFI has been down for the past few days. The Tech Support Staff will develop and after-action report.

Ms. Erdmann was recognized by Mr. Urbas for her outstanding job of welcoming everyone back to school for the new year.

Service Awards were presented to employees who have worked for the District for 15, 20 and 25 years. Photos will be available for the School Committee web site shortly.

Enrollment for school year 2019-2020 is 1,380 students. There are 487 students at the HS with 127 students in 9<sup>th</sup> grade, 127 in 10<sup>th</sup> grade 118 in 11<sup>th</sup> grade and 114 Seniors. The Middle School enrollment is 361, Memorial School 310 and Essex 222. Comprehensive information will be available at the next School Committee meeting.

Mr. Warnock asked about the status of Out-of-District placements. Superintendent Beaudoin indicated Out-of-District placements were fluid. Some parents had opted to return to in District and move-ins with outside programs are still in process. Dr. Collins is monitoring.

Ms. Cameron asked if there was any help with Out-of-District placements from the State? Superintendent Beaudoin indicated a Round Table sub-group last year did significant work around Chapter 70 and created a mock district to demonstrate the large part of District budgets that go into what they called “intervention culture”. The point was to show while enrollment may be going down extra resources were going into intervention programs that do not respond to 2 ½.

The State mandates Districts spend on specific programs without funding the mandates; with the result funding comes from general programming. Ms. Cameron stated the process is too slow. The entire State Educational Budget is not large enough to cover Chapter 70 and there is not enough funding to address poverty remediation and provide funding for non-traditional education social services and counseling intervention.

- Goals
  - Labor Management Relations: Utilize interest based bargaining methodology successfully negotiate a multi-year META Teacher Assistant contract and follow-up work from META Teacher agreement.
  - Reestablish the District Health & Wellness Committee (Carry forward as Priority goal FY 20.
  - Collaborate with Director of Curriculum & Instruction on Phase 3 Roo-Out RULER and Partner with Yale/Harvard on implementation study.
  - Work collaboratively with the High School Principal and Director of Curriculum & Instructional Technology to develop the vision of the graduate

- Develop and pass a budget that maintains quality and forward progress maintaining efficient practices but shifting to greater advocacy for increased funding to the District. Redesign of annual budget document.
- Capital Plan – prepare for possible expansion of the Middle School and additional facility challenges.

Ms. Cameron mentioned at the Regionalization Meeting MERSD was mentioned in 4 areas: On Boarding New Employees, North Shore Regional IT Collaborative, Facilities and SRO. Ms. Cameron wondered if Superintendent Beaudoin would want to include any of the regionalization suggestions for MERSD in her goals.

### **7) School Committee Comment –**

Ms. Cameron suggested School Committee members develop relationships with members on Town Boards. Getting to know and connect with other Committee and Board Members and building personal relationships help in communicating the needs of the District.

Ms. Weld would like to see the Committee change the time of the meeting from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. She would like to allow of working parents to have time to come to the meeting and participate in the process. She strongly feels that the meeting time 6:00 p.m. does not allow for parents to address their needs at home and get to the meeting.

Following discussion, the Committee will restructure the meetings to address more “business” related issues first allowing for parents and residents to join the meeting for Public Comment and areas of the agenda of interest and concern to parents and residents. The Committee will continue to discuss the meeting time change at future meetings.

### **B. Adjourn**

*Mr. Warnock moved to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Wolf seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

### **School Committee Future Meetings:**

- September 17, 2019
- October 1, 2019